





FOR THE MOST PART, THE BATTLE AGAINST OWLHOOT TERROR IN THE OLD WEST WAS CARRIED OUT TO THE TUNE OF BARKING SIX-GUNS AND POUNDING FISTS. BUT THERE WAS ANOTHER WEAPON AND THE BRAVEST OF MEN CRINGED TO SEE IT IN THE HANDS OF A MASTER. THIS WAS THE DEADLY

MAYOU

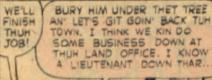
MARINE





DURANGO KID





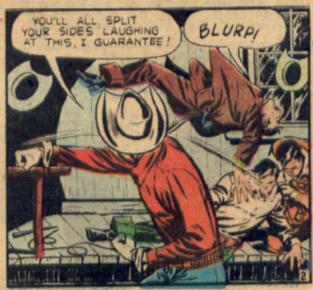


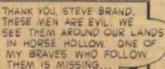














THAT IS WHY I
COME TO WHITE
MAN'S VILLAGE
TODAY, I THINK
BAD ONES PLAN
EVIL. I FEAR
THEY WANT TAKE
MORE OF OUR

WHY, THAT'S
IMPOSSIBLE
CHIEF FLEE
FOOT! HORSE
HOLLOW BELONGS TO
THE CHEYENNE
BY SACRED
TREATY!







THAT CAN'T BE! THAT TITLE IS A FORGERY! ... COLONEL, WILL YOU COME IN HERE AND





NEVER! WE NOT GIVE UP LAND WE KNOW IS OURS! WE WILL FIGHT TO THE DEATH! I HAVE



YUH HEARD WHUT
THET INJUN SAID!
I WANT FULL
PERTECTION
FROM THE U.S.
ARMY!

WHAT STONE
DID YOU
CRAWL FROM
UNDER?

WELL, SIR-IS THE ARMY GOING TO WAR FOR THAT LAND-HOG?

NO CHOICE, STEVE. WE'RE
DUTY BOUND TO PROTECT
THE LEGAL PROPERTY
OF ANY CITIZEN WHO'S
THREATENED. I'LL HAVE
TO SEND MY TROOP
INTO HORSE HOLLOW—
MUCH AS I DISLIKE
THAT SNEAK, SLADE!







I'M DEAD SURE THAT
SLADE'S TITLE IS A
FORGERY-BUT I CAN'T
PROVE IT... WAIT! MAYBE
I CAN! QUICK - THE
TELEGRAPH OFFICE!



NEXT MORNING ... AT HORSE HOLLOW!

THE LONG
KNIVES RIDE
THIS WAY,
CHIEF FLEET
FOOT!

WE FOUND BODY OF RED
DEER, GREAT CHIEF-BURIED
IN THE HOLLOW- AND AROUND
HIS NECK, MARKS OF A
WHITE MANYS WHIP!

THEN-TO AVENGE OUR
BROTHER AND TO DEFEND
OUR LAND-ATTACK!
I AM AN OLD MAN, BUT
ONCE MORE I LEAD THE
GREAT CHEYENNE TO
BATTLE FOR HONOR!



HERE THEY COME, THAT IT IS! PULL THAT IT

But, suppenly-across the plains a horseman comes riding! It is THE DURANGO KID— FEARLESSLY CUTTING IN BETWEEN THE TWO FORCES!







BLAZES! THAT'S GOOD NEWS!
THIS WAS ONE BATTLE I SURE
DIDN'T LIKE GOING INTO! MY
APOLOGIES, CHIEF — I'M JUST A
DUMB SOLDIER TRYING TO
DO HIS DUTY!



BUT WE RIDE FOR VENGEANCE TOO, COLONEL! OUR BROTHER, RED DEER, HAS BEEN SLAIN— AND AROUND HIS NECK YOU CAN SEE THE MARKS OF THE EVIL SLADE'S WHIP!



CHIEF, THE WHITE MAN HAS LAWS AGAINST MURDER TOO! I PROMISE THAT "WHIP" SLADE WILL FACE TRIAL FOR MURDER — AND YOU CAN BE A WITNESS AGAINST HIM. BUT YOU MUST LET ME DO IT MY WAY!



DURANGO'S WORD IS HONEST AND
THE CHEYENNE HAS MUCH FAITH IN HIM.
LET IT BE AS DURANGO SAYS. LET THERE
BE PEACE AMONG US!

































LOOD WAS THICKER THAN WATER IN THE TOWN OF SKULL GAP — AND A HEAP SIGHT MORE PLENTIFUL! IT WAS THE KIND OF PLACE THAT WENT TO SLEEP OR DEATH TO THE STACCATO LULLABY OF A SIX-GUN SONG THAT SANG ITS CRASHING DIRGE FROM DAWN TO DUSK! IT WAS WILD ALL RIGHT — AND IT LIVED THE GRIM LAW OF A JUNGLE EVE BRAND TOPHAND EXTRAORD— TILL THE DURANGO KID CAME ALONG TO

GOOD BED MYSELF

FOR A

CHANGE

NER -

STEVE BRAND TOPHAND EXTRAORD-INARY, AND HIS SIDEKICK, MULEY PIKE, ARE DRIFTING SOUTH ...





"Write the Law in Gunsmoke!"

RIGHT! WHATTCHA SAY, STEVIE ? HOW ABOUT WOULDN'T MIND SLEEP ING IN A HIDIN' YORE HORSE, RAIDER, AN' YORE DURANGO OUTFIT IN THEM ROCKY HILLS OVER THAR-AN GIT US INTUH TOWN) FER A SPELL? BEEN LIVIN' OFF THUH RANGE OKAY, PARD NIGH ONTO TWO WEEKS



RAIDER AND DURANGO KID EQUIPMENT ARE CAREFULLY HIDDEN IN A CAVE...

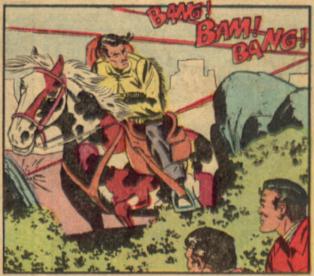
LET'S GO! HOW ABOUT I'M GOING MAKING ME A TO SINK PROMISE, STEVIE ? LET'S JUST BE TWO MYSELF HOT BATH DRIFTIN' SADDLE-TRAMPS - NO MORE. NO FIGHT FIRST THING JEST RESTIN'!

IT'S A' DEAL PARTNER! WE'LL PLAY HOOKEY FROM OWLHOOT-BUSTING AND SIMPLY ENJOY OURSELVES! GONNA HAVE US A VACATION! GONNA HAVE US A WONDERFUL











AW, STEVIE, YUH PROMISED! YUH
PROMISED NO FIGHTIN-NO SHOOTIN - NO NUTHIN! IF THET HOMBRE
IS BEIN CHASED OUTA TOWN,
THAR AUST BE A DURN GOOD
REASON! LET'S MIND OUR
TOWN BUSINESS!



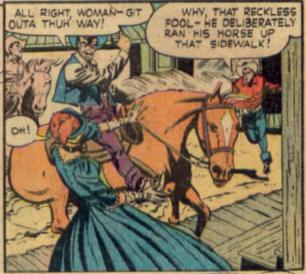
WELL - I GUESS I DID PROMISE. OKAY, MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT! WHISTLE FOR THOSE SPOOKED BRONCS AND LET'S GO! ... SKULL GAP, HERE WE COME!















MULEY, .

THEY'RE KILLERS, THEY'RE MINGO'S MEN. AND THEY'LL STOP AT NOTHING! THEY'D JUST AS SOON KILL YOU AS SWAT A FLY! DON'T GO, SIR - IT ISN'T WORTH RISKING YOUR LIFE - YOU'RE

















T'M SIMMONS - FATHER O' THIS HERE YOUNG LADY YUM PERTECTED. I'M THANKIN' YUM - AS CHAIRMAN O'OUR SECRET CITIZENS' COMMITTEE FER LAW AN' ORDER!



MINGO'S THUH BIGGEST RANCHER IN THESE PARTS. OWNED EVERY-THING IN SIGHT — AT LEAST, 'TILL THUH GOVERNMENT OPENED UP THIS STRIP FER SETTLIN'. HIM AN' HIS HIRED GUNNIES ARE TERRORIZIN' THUH WHOLE COUNTRY...



WE GOT A CITIZENS
COMMITTEE TUH
CHALLENGE MINGOBUT THUH PEOPLE
ARE STILL SKEERED.
THEY NEED A 5 TROMG
MAN TUH LEAD EM...

















YOU CAN RUN THAT RANCH OF YOURS, MINGO - BUT CAN'T RUN THIS TOWN! WARI EH 2 GUNSMOKE LAW IS OUT. THAT S EITHER SUITS ME DURANGO!

YAHDO! IT'S

DURANGOI

HE'S SIDIN' WITH US!

MARTHA -

GO GIT ME

MUH RIFLE!

I CAN MAKE WAR, TOO, DURANGO! I'M COMING BACK HERE IN THE MORNING WITH ALL MY GUNSLINGERS -AND
IF YOU FOOLS HAVEN'T
COME TO YOUR SENSES BY
THEN, IT'LL BE
A FIGHT TO THE WE'LL BE WE'LL BE FINISH! FOR YOU MINGO!

ALL NIGHT, DURANGO RIDES THE PLAINS.

SETTLERS! COWMEN! MEN OF THE FREE PLAINS! DEFEND YOUR HOMES! WIPE OUT DWLHOOT TERROR! GET INTO TOWN RIGHT NOW AND JOIN THE ALL-OUT FIGHT AGAINST MINGO AND HIS ROTTEN BROOD!



YER DURANGO'S WITH US - SEEN 'IM MYSELF! BEEN WAITIN' A LONG

THIS LAND SAFE FER OUR GONNA RIDE KIDS AN MINGO OUT! WOMEN - THAT'S THET'S WHUT WHUT!

GONNA MAKE

GIT MOVIN' NEIGHBORS-







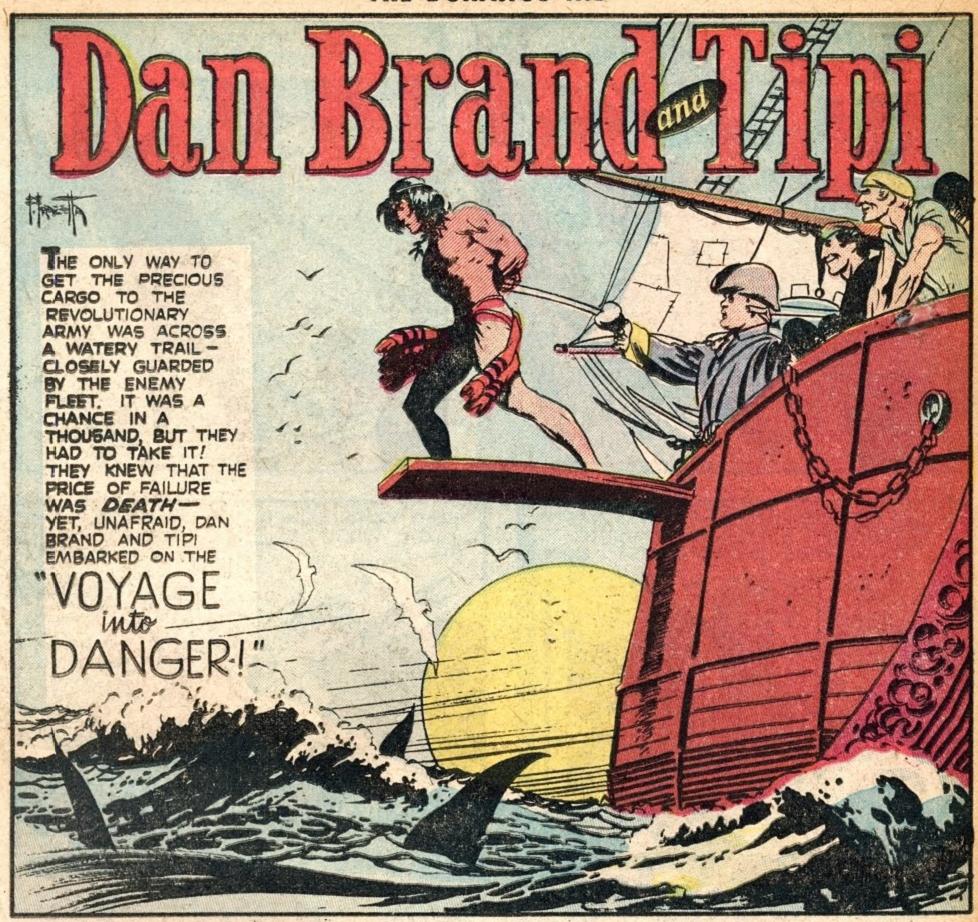






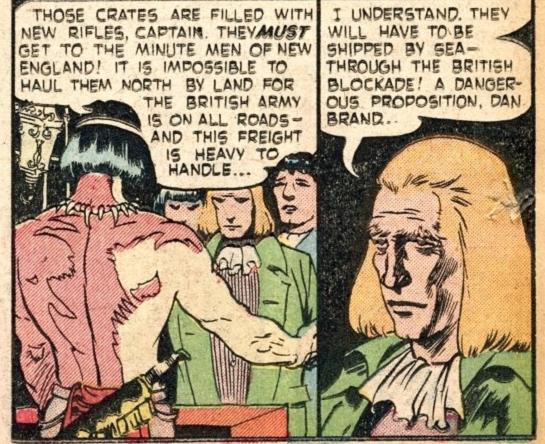






A TINY FISHING VILLAGE -

















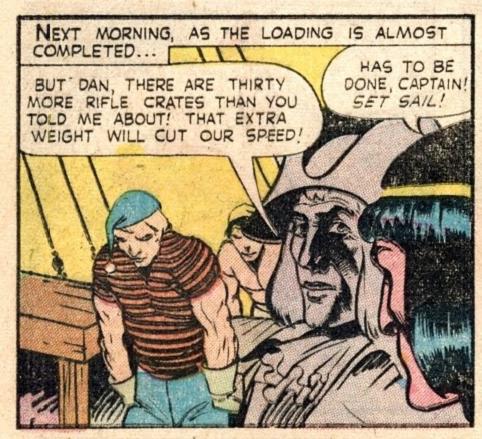
YOU'RE A BRAVE MAN,

I'VE FACED DEATH BE-



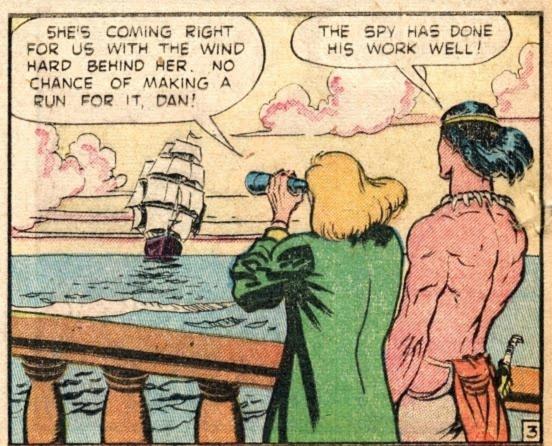
















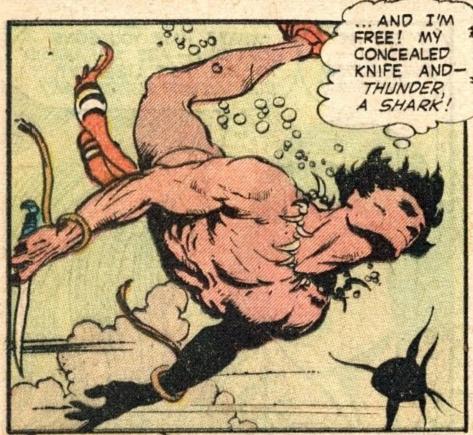


















BUT - CLINGING TO THE

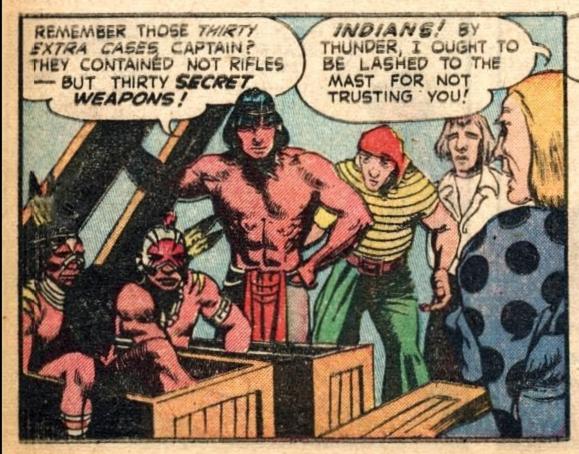








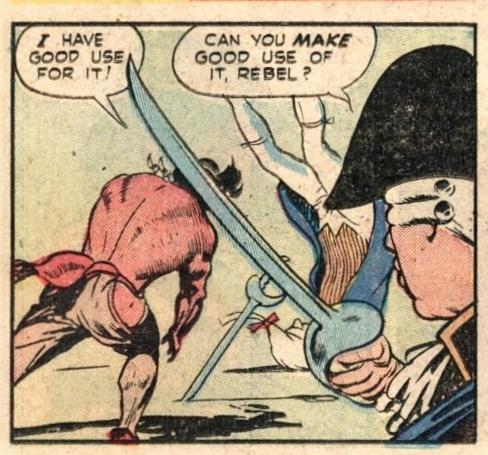




















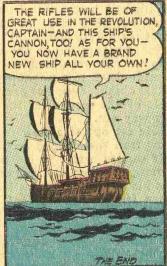














HE THIN PLUME of smoke lifted upward from the red sandstone bluff. The man crouched in the shadows of a pinon watched it with narrowed eyes. His tongue came out to lick at his dry lips, as cold terror ran its way down his spine beneath the faded blue shirt. "Apaches," he told the dry New Mexico air. "On the war trail—and me with a dead horse-and no bullet for my gun!"

He had been out prospecting in the Dragoons, hunting gold. He had a few nuggets in a leather bag at his waist, enough to make his trip into these mountains well worth while, it he could make it back to the post-with his scalp still on his head!

Zeke Gibbons shook his tawney head. wrinkles of worry furrowing his forehead. Without a horse, without a gun to fight his way out of a trap, his chances of saving that scalp were almost nil. Gibbons had seen what Apaches did to the men they caught. He had seen men hung over a slow fire, tied upside down to a wagonwheel. He had seen other things, even less pretty than what was left of the men after the fire had burned its way out.

He set out at a slow trot along the narrow trail that looped around the mesaland. He carried a rifle in his right hand, a rifle whose chamber and magazine were empty. At his right side hung a long hunting knife in a fringed sheath. If I can keep out of sight, maybe I can make it. . . .

The sun poured down with terrific fury It slid over the wide brim of his soft hat to beat down on his shoulders; it was an exhausting weight on his back. It slowed his feet and numbed his muscles.

Gibbons came to a bend in the trail. Ten feet below the trail went on. If he could get down to that lower trail, he would save himself hours of travel. But he would make himself a prime target against the sky for keen Apache eyes.

He shrugged and went to his knees. I make it or I don't, he told himself. He dug the long blade of his knife into the loose soil, and dug with a toe at a protruding rock.

Midway down the face of the cliff he

heard the yell.

It froze his blood, for it came from deep in the belly, and ulullated out from a throbbing Apache throat. Something came, and whined high overhead and then he heard the flat, dull report of a Winchester sounding across the flats.

They've seen me," Gibbons grated between his teeth. "Now they'll be coming

this way on their ponies and -'

He choked off his words. No need to waste breath on the empty air. He would need all that breath for running. And then he felt solid rock under his moccasin and he lowered himself to the ledge.

He ran into the approaching dusk with long strides, moving steadily downward toward the flats. He was planning ahead, knowing the Apaches would be coming for him. Night was only two hours away. It was dry and cool at night, a good time to travel, once he was off the mesa.

Gibbons found a tiny spring and lay on his belly, drinking carefully, storing up the wetness against the coming darkness He rolled over and lay on his back, limp, letting his muscles ease. Overhead he could see the stars come winking out, bright in the black-

ness of the sky. He wondered idly if he would see those stars tomorrow night.

When he felt refreshed, he went trotting onto the flats. Somewhere out behind him, in the blackness rimming the sotol and the sage, the Apaches were coming, swiftly and steadily on their ponies. Gibbons knew he had one advantage: on foot, he would not loom high up against the horizon, as he would if he had been mounted. By taking advantage of the cactus and ocotillo, running from clump to clump so that he merged with their denser shadows, he might make it.

Now as he ran he could hear the drumming hoofs. They might not attack him at night—the Apaches, like most other Indians—rarely fought at night, believing that the spirit who came to guide them to the happy hunting grounds might not find them in the blackness, were they killed. But if they learned he had no bullets for the rifle

he carried -

Gibbons put that thought away from mm,

and concentrated on running.

He came upon the wagon an hour after midnight. It still smoked, its charred ribs smouldering, a dull red showing here and

there where the fire lingered.

Gibbons did not look at what remained of the two bodies on the ground. The Apaches had caught these men early yesterday, had amused themselves with torture for some hours, then had fired the wagon and run off the horses.

He hunted in the wreckage, and found black char from the ruins of the smoking wagon. Carefully he ran the soft black char over his hands and face, turning them as black as the night around him. Then he took new and fresher bits of char and rubbed it over his shirt and trousers.

"I'm as black as the night itself," he told the dead things on the ground. "They'll

never see me now!"

He hunted for bullets, but the Apache search had been thorough. They had taken rifles and bullets, food and clothing.

Gibbons ran on.

It was an hour before dawn when the Apache found him. Gibbons was looking for a windfall or cave in which to spend the daytime hours. As he hunted, a grim figure rose up out of the night, reining in abruptly.

The thought came to Gibbons, even as he went off his feet at the Apache, that the redskin was more surprise to see him than Gibbons was to find the Apache barring his path. He was a short, stocky brave with wide shoulders that betrayed terrific physical strength. A red flannel headband ran about his dank black hair. High mocassins reached almost to his knees. His thighs were bare.

The Apache grunted as Gibbons rammed

into him, driving his head goatlike, forward into the Apache's belly. With a guttural "Whooof," the Apache tumbled backwards.

Gibbons was on him even as he hit the ground. His fingers went for the greasy throat, tangling in the long hair. He gulped in a lungful of air and his fingers found

their grip and tightened.

The Apache writhed, clawing at those iron fingers, trying to rip them free so as to scream for help from his fellow tribesmen who were even then hunting for this man who sought his life. But there was maniacal strength in Zeke Gibbons in these dawn hours. He was fighting not only to stay alive, but to keep himself from the tortures that had made the name of Apache a dread one in the American southwest.

The Apache's struggles grew weaker. There was a dry rattling sounding in his throat. He shook spasmodically and his arms fell away. He lay there as Gibbons held his grip for another minute until he was positive that the man under him was dead.

Then he got to his knees, ripped loose the bandolier of brass cartridges and lifted the

carbine the Apache had dropped.

He caught the Apache pony after a short chase, but did not mount him. Grasping the rope hackamore, he led him at a walk across the flats. "If I get up on him, those other braves may see me. If I let him go, they'll maybe find him, hunt for their missing friend, and then come hotfooting it after me!"

The first pink tints of dawn found Gibbons plodding across a sandy plain fifteen miles from the trading post. He halted to look behind him. The red sandstone bluffs loomed high in the distance.

Gibbons grinned, even though the effort hurt his dry lips. "Now let 'em catch me!" He swung onto the pony and kicked at its

ribs.

Fresh, the wiry little bronc began to run. Gibbons let him go for a mile, then pulled him in to a slower pace. "No need to blaze daylight. Those 'Pache devils will have run up and down all night, trying to find me. They're in no shape to catch you. I've saved you for these last few miles. If they show, you can run your fool head off!"

Toward noon, he saw the Apaches trailing him, miles to the rear. He shook the reins, and the tough pony really ran. Gibbons laughed, as only a man can laugh who has touched death's cold fingers and lived to

remember it.

Two miles away, he could see the log walls of the post. The Apaches would never get him now. He was safe.

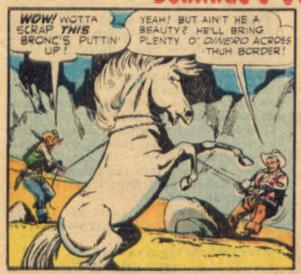
Zeke Gibbons began to whistle. . .

THE END



DUMB LUCK SOMETIMES ACCOMPLISHES WHAT BRAINS CAN NEVER DO! THE SLICKEST OWLHOOTS IN THE COUNTRY WOULD GIVE THEIR EYE-TEETH FOR A CLUE TO THE DURANGO KID'S HIDEOUT... BUT IT TAKES TWO BLUNDERING HORSE-THIEVES TO STUMBLE ACROSS IT AND THUS KICK OFF THE SUSPENSEFULL, THRILL-FULL STORY OF

"DURANGO'S STOLEN STEED!"













HOLD IT, MULEY! LOOK-WE'RE (TOO LATE! OMIGOSH! THUH SHERIFF AN' A POSSE! THEY GOT THUH HOSE THIEVES -AN' THEY GOT RAIDER, TOO!



STAY FAR AWAY FROM RAIDER, MULEY! HE'LL RECOGNIZE US AND GIVE US AWA! HOWDY, SHERIFF— FINE CATCH YOU'VE GOT THERE!



SHORE IS,
STEVE! KOTCHED GOING TO
TWO HOSS
THIEVES, AN'
WHUT'S MOREWE GOT
DURANGO'S
BRONC, RAIDER!

WHAT'S
GOING TO
STEVE,
BE DONE
WITH THOSE
STOLEN
HORSES,
SHERIFF?
THEM
AIN'T
THEY'

ACCORDIN' TUH LAW, STEVE, ANYBODY WHO KIN PROVE OWNER-SHIP KIN HAVE HIS BRONC BACK. AN' THEM BRONCS AS AIN'T CLAIMED, THEY'LL HAVE TUH BE AUCTIONED



TO CLAIM RAIDER. DURANGO WOULD HAVE TO SHOW HE'S THE LEGAL OWNER-AND THAT'S STEVE BRAND! WE CAN'T DO THAT!

AN' IF YUH DON'T CLAIM HIM, HE'LL BE AUCTIONED DEE! MEBBE WE KIN BUY RAIDER AT

NEX

YAQ!

WE CAN'T DO THAT EITHER, IF I BOUGHT HIM AT AUCTION KNOW RAIDER BELONGS TO ME FROM THEN ON. DURANGO WOULD NEVER RIDE HIM AGAIN!



WAL, ALL THE HOSSES IS CLAIMED-EXCEPT DURANGOS!

ONE

HUN-

AN

FIFTY



RIGHT! OF COURSE WE'LL LEAVE MONEY TO REIMBURSE THAT PERSON BUT EVEN SO THAT WILL MAKE DURANGO OFFICIALLY AN OUTLAW! BUT IT'S THE ONLY WAY! I MUST HAVE RAIDER BACK! NO OTHER HORSE CAN SERVE DURANGO!

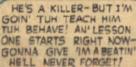






DON'T TELL ME HOW TUH TREAT MY HOSS SHERIFF! COME ALONG SOMEBODY ROPE THIS SERVES 'IM RIGHT-CRITTER QUICK- AFORE JERKIN' A HOSS NOOSE KILLS ME! HE LIKE THET! YUH BLASTED CAYUSE













WAL, WE GOT 'IM HYAR! WHUT IN BLAZES YUH WANT DON'T AIM TUH RIDE ! RIDE ORNERY



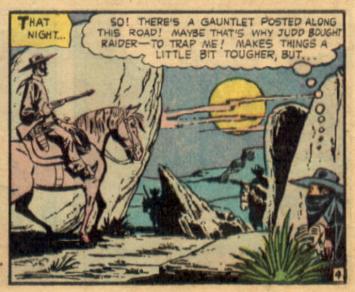
THET HOSS IS GOIN' TUH BE BAIT - TUH TRAP DURANGO! DURANGO'S SHORE TUH COME AFTER 'IM TONIGHT AN THET'S WHEN HE WALKS INTUH OUR TRAP!





COMIN' OR GOIN', DURANGO'LL HAVE TO COME ALONG THIS ROAD! I'M POSTIN' YOU GUYS ALONG HYAR. KEEP HID -- AN' SHOOT TUH KILL!





THIS TREE WILL DO! LUCKY
TVE TRAINED RAIDER FOR
JUST SUCH SITUATIONS AS
THESE, I'LL GIVE THE BIRDCALL AND THEN I'LL HAVE TO
LEAVE IT TO RAIDER TO
TO THE REST!























ACCOUNT NUMBER TWO - THIS SETTLES WHAT I OWE YOU FOR TRYING TO MURDER DURANGO! ... AH, AND HERE COMES RAIDER BACK AGAIN - LEAD THAT BUNCH CLEAR IN A CIRCLE!...GOOD BOY!







Here it is fellas! send for it NOW!



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HAIR WAVED!

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